

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 076270
ORIGIN SS-25

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DRAFTED BY ARA/CEN:MBOVA:MMS

APPROVED BY ARA:TATODMAN

ARA - CWBRAY

S/S- MR. GAMBLE

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MANAGUA NIACT IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 076270

EXDIS, FOR AMBASSADOR FROM ASSISTANT SECRETARY TODMAN

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SHUM, EAID, NU

SUBJECT: LONG COMMITTEE HEARINGS ON NICARAGUA

1. THE TESTIMONY WHICH WAS PRESENTED TODAY BY THE DEPARTMENT WAS EXPLICITLY DESIGNED TO PRESERVE THE SECURITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM WITH NICARAGUA. THE MINIMUM PRICE WE FELT WE COULD PAY WAS TO PRESENT THE SITUATION IN A CANDID MANNER IN THE FACE OF A HOSTILE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE. IN OUR STATEMENT WE AGREED TO CONSULT WITH THE CONGRESS PRIOR TO SIGNING A SECURITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR FY 78. NO OTHER APPROACH WAS POSSIBLE IN VIEW OF THE ADMINISTRATION'S STRONG POLICY IN FAVOR OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE PRESENT ATTITUDE OF THE US CONGRESS.

2. IT IS TOO EARLY TO PREDICT WHETHER THIS APPROACH WILL BE SUCCESSFUL; BUT, IN OUR OPINION, NO OTHER WOULD HAVE BEEN.

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 STATE 076270

3. YOU SHOULD CONVEY TO PRESIDENT SOMOZA, IN MY NAME, THE DEPARTMENT'S BELIEF THAT WE NOW HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO WORK TOGETHER -- QUIETLY AND DISCREETLY -- IN THE VERY SENSITIVE AREA OF HUMAN RIGHTS FOR THE PURPOSE OF SERVING HIS INTERESTS AND OURS.

4. THE WRITING IS CLEARLY ON THE WALL, HOWEVER. IT WOULD BE MOST USEFUL AT THIS JUNCTURE, AND AS THE COMMITTEE'S DELIBERATION PROCEED IN THE NEXT SEVERAL DAYS, IF THE PRESIDENT COULD TAKE A FORWARD STEP OR TWO; FOR EXAMPLE, THE STATE OF SIEGE AND TIGHTER INSTRUCTIONS RE THE CONDUCT OF THE NATIONAL GUARD. HE WILL BE THE BEST JUDGE OF WHAT IS POSSIBLE, HOWEVER.

5. OBVIOUSLY WE CANNOT GUARANTEE FAVORABLE ACTION BY THE COMMITTEE IN RESPONSE, BUT IT IS MY SENSE THAT A FORWARD STEP OR TWO WOULD HELP PRESERVE AN IMPORTANT PROGRAM.

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Message Attributes

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